MISCELLANIES

BY THE

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Publiſhed from the original Manuſcripts.

Now to grave Books I bid the mind retreat,
And ſuch as make me rather good than great.

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THE firſt ſteps towards ill are very carefully to be avoided, for we inſenſibly go on, when we are once entered, and do not keep up a lively abhorrence of the leaſt unworthineſs.

To gain, and enjoy, an univerſal good character by our ſuperior merit and excellencies, is the laſt degree of happineſs we can hope for here.

It is an endleſs and frivolous perſuit, to act by any other rule than the care of ſatisfying our own minds in what we do.

Diffidence and preſumption, upon account of our perſons, are equally faults, and both ariſe from the want of knowing, or rather endeavouring to know ourſelves, and for what we ought to be valued or neglected.

That partiuclar ſcheme which comprehends the ſocial virtues, may give employment to the moſt induſtrious temper, and find a perſon in more buſineſs than the moſt

active ſtation of life; to adviſe the ignorant, relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted, are duties that fall in our way almoſt every day in our lives; we have frequent opportunities of mitigating the fierceneſs of party; of doing juſtice to the characters of the deſerving; of ſoftening the envious; quieting the angry; and rectifying the prejudiced; which are all of them employments ſuited to a reaſonable nature, and bring great ſatisfaction to the perſons who can buſy themſelves in them with diſcretion; but the mind never unbends itſelf ſo agreeably, as in the converſation of a well choſen friend, it eaſes and unloads the mind; clears and improves the underſtanding; engenders thoughts and knowledge; animates virtue and good reſolutions; ſooths and allays the paſſions, and finds employment for the vacant hours of life: Thoſe who live under an habitual ſenſe of the divine preſence, keep up a perpetual chearfulneſs of temper, and enjoy every moment, the ſatisfaction of thinking themſelves in company with their deareſt and beſt of friends, their time never lies heavy upon them, it is impoſſible for them to be alone, their thoughts and paſſions are the moſt buſied at ſuch times, when thoſe of others are the moſt unactive.

True affliction labours to be inviſible, is a ſtranger to ceremony, and bears in its own nature, a dignity much above the little circumſtances

circumſtances which are affected under the notion of decency; it is common to ſhed tears without much ſorrow, and as common to ſuffer much without ſheding tears; grief and weaping are frequent companions, but never in their higheſt exceſſes; the ſorrow which appears ſo eaſily at the eyes, cannot have pierced deeply into the heart, the heart diſtended with grief, ſtops all paſſages for tears or lamentations; as laughter does not proceed from profound joy, ſo neither does weeping from profound ſorrow.

MUTUAL good humour is a dreſs we ought to appear in whenever we meet.

THOSE who are not obliged to labour by the condition in which they are born, are more miſerable than the reſt of the world, unleſs they indulge themſelves in that voluntary labour, which goes by the name of exerciſe.

The wiſe for cure on exerciſe depend,
God never made his works for man to mend.
DRYDEN.

OUR firſt care ſhould be to avoid the reproaches of our own hearts; our next to eſcape the cenſures of the world, if the laſt interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected, but otherwiſe, there cannot be a greater ſatisfaction to an honeſt mind, than to ſee thoſe approbations which

it gives itſelf, ſeconded by the applauſes of the public, we are more ſure of our own conduct, when the virdict which we paſs upon our own behaviour, is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know us.

The utmoſt we can hope for in this world is contentment, if we aim at any thing higher, we ſhall meet with nothing but grief and diſappointment; we ſhould direct all our ſtudies and endeavours at making ourſelves eaſy now, and happy hereafter; if all the happineſs that is diſperſed through the whole race of mankind in this world were drawn together, and put into the poſſeſſion of any ſingle man, it would not make a very happy being; tho' on the contrary, if the miſeries of the whole ſpecies were fixed in a ſingle perſon, they would make a very miſerable one: Enquiries after happineſs, and rules for attaining it, are not ſo neceſſary or uſeful as the art of conſolation, and ſupporting ourſelves under afflictions.

That part of our life which is ordinarily underſtood by the word converſation, is an indulgence to the ſociable part of our make, and ſhould incline us to bring our proportion of good will, or good humour, among the friends we meet with, and not to trouble them with relations, which muſt of neceſſity oblige them to a real or feigned affliction,

affliction, cares, diſtreſſes, diſeaſes, uneaſineſſes, and diſlikes of our own, are by no means to be obtruded upon our friends; if we would conſider how little of this viciſſitude of motion and reſt, which we call life, is ſpent with ſatisfaction, we ſhould be more tender of our friends than to bring them little ſorrows which do not belong to them; there is no real life but chearful life, therefore whatever we do, we ſhould keep up the chearfulneſs of our ſpirits and never let them ſink below an inclination, at leaſt, to be well pleaſed, the way to this is to keep our bodies in exerciſe; our minds at eaſe; that inſipid ſtate wherein neither are in vigour, is not to be accounted any part of our portion of being; when we are in the ſatisfaction of ſome innocent pleaſure, or perſuit of ſome laudable deſign, we are in the poſſeſſion of life, of human life, fortune will give us diſappointments enough, and nature is attended with infirmities enough, without our adding to the unhappy ſide of our account by our ſpleen or ill humour; it is certain that to enjoy life and health as a conſtant feaſt, we ſhould not think pleaſure neceſſary, but, if poſſible, to arrive at an equality of mind.

THERE is but one way of fortifying our ſouls againſt gloomy preſages and terrors of mind, and that is by ſecuring to ourſelves the friendſhip and protection of that being who diſpoſes of events, and governs

futurity; he ſees at one view the whole thread of our exiſtence, not only that part of it which we have already paſſed through, but that which runs forward into all the depths of eternity; when we lay ourſelves down to ſleep we ſhould recommend ourſelves to his care, when we awake give ourſelves up to his directions, amidſt all the evils that threaten us, we ſhould look up to him for help, and queſtion not, but he will either avert them, or turn them to our advantage, though we know neither the time nor the manner of the death we are to die, we ſhould not be at all ſolicitous about it, becauſe we are ſure that he knows them both, and that he will not fail to comfort and ſupport us under them.

It is a fantaſtical way of thinking when we promiſe ourſelves an alteration in our conduct from change of place and difference of circumſtances; the ſame paſſions will attend us wherever we are till they are conquered, and we can never live to our ſatisfaction in the deepeſt retirement, unleſs we are capable of living ſo, in ſome meaſure, amidſt the noiſe and buſineſs of the world.

When we are thoroughly perſwaded that we ought neither to admire, wiſh for, or perſue any thing but what is exactly our duty, it is not in the power of ſeaſons, perſons, or accidents, to diminiſh our value, thoſe only are great who can neglect the applauſe

applauſe of the multitude, and enjoy themſelves independent of its favour, it is a more exquiſite delight to ſay to ourſelves, we have done well, than to hear the whole human race pronounce us glorious, except we ourſelves can join with them, in our own reflections; a mind thus equal and uniform, may be deſerted by little faſhionable admirers and followers, but will ever be had in reverence by ſouls like itſelf; the branches of the oak endure all the ſeaſons of the year though its leaves fall off in autumn, and thoſe too will be reſtored with the returning ſpring.

A Believer may be excuſed by the moſt hardened Atheiſt for endeavouring to make him a convert, becauſe he does it with an eye to both their intereſts: The Atheiſt is inexcuſable who tries to gain over a Believer, becauſe he does not propoſe the doing himſelf or Believer any good by ſuch a converſion.

The proſpect of a future ſtate is the ſecret comfort and refreſhment of our ſouls, it is that which makes nature look gay about us, it doubles all our pleaſures, and ſupports us under all afflictions, we can look at diſappointment and misfortunes, pain and ſickneſs, death itſelf; and what is worſe than death, the loſs of thoſe who are deareſt to us, with greater indifference, ſo long as we keep in view the pleaſures of eternity,

ternity, and the ſtate of being in which there will be no fears nor apprehenſions, pains nor ſorrows, ſickneſs nor ſeparation. Why will any one be ſo impertinently officious as to tell us all this is fancy and deluſion? if it is a dream, let us enjoy it ſince it makes us both happier and better.

THOSE are not to be truſted who do not believe in a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, not only natural ſelf-love but reaſon directs us to promote our own intereſt above all things, it can never be for the intereſt of a Believer to do me a miſchief, becauſe he is ſure upon the ballance of accounts to find himſelf a loſer by it; on the contrary, if he conſulted his own welfare in his behaviour towards me, it will lead him to do me all the good he can, and at the ſame time reſtrain him from doing me an injury. An unbeliever does not act like a reaſonable creature, if he favours me contrary to his preſent intereſt, or does not diſtreſs me when it turns to his preſent advantage; honour and good nature may, indeed, tie up his hands; but as thoſe would be very much ſtrengthed by reaſon and principle, ſo without them they are only inſtincts, or wavering unſettled notions, which reſt on no foundation; infidelity has been attacked with ſo good ſucceſs of late years, that it is driven out of all it out works, the Atheiſt has not found his poſt tenable, and is therefore retired into Deiſm,

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and a diſbelief of revealed religion only; but the truth of it is, the greateſt number of this ſet of men are thoſe who, for want of a virtuous education, or examining the grounds of religion, know ſo very little of the matter in queſtion, that their infidelity is but another term for their ignorance, as folly and inconſiderateneſs are the foundation of infidelity, the great pillars and ſupporters of it are, either a vanity of appearing wiſer than the reſt of the world, or an oſtentation of courage in deſpiſing the terrors of another world, which have too great an influence on what they call weaker minds, or an averſion to a belief that muſt cut them off from many of thoſe pleaſures they propoſe to themſelves, and fill them with remorſe for many of thoſe they have already taſted.

THE great received articles of the Chriſtian religion have been ſo clearly proved from the authority of that divine revelation in which they are delivered, that it is impoſſible for thoſe who have ears to hear, and eyes to ſee, not to be convinced of them, but were it poſſible for any thing in the Chriſtian faith to be erroneous, I can find no ill conſequences in adhering to it, the great points of the incarnation and ſufferings of our Saviour, produce naturally ſuch habits of virtue in our minds, that, I ſay, ſuppoſing it were poſſible for us to be miſtaken in them, the infidel himſelf muſt at leaſt allow, that

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no other ſyſtem of religion could ſo effectually contribute to the heightening of morality; they give us great ideas of the dignity of human nature, and of the love which the ſupreme being bears to his creatures, and conſequently engage us in the higheſt acts of duty towards our Creator, our neighbours and ourſelves; how many noble arguments has St. Paul recited from the chief articles of our religion for the adorning of morality in its three great branches, to give a ſingle example in each kind; what can be a ſtronger motive to a firm truſt and reliance on the mercies of our Maker, than the giving us his Son to ſuffer for us; what can make us love and eſteem even the moſt inconſiderable of mankind more than the thought that Chriſt died for him; or diſpoſe us to a ſtricter guard upon the purity of our own hearts, than our being members of Chriſt, and a part of the ſociety of which that immaculate perſon is the head; but theſe are only a ſpecimen of thoſe admirable enforcements of morality which the apoſtle has drawn from the hiſtory of our bleſſed Saviour; if our modern infidels conſidered theſe matters with that candour and ſeriouſneſs which they deſerve, we ſhould not ſee them act with ſuch a ſpirit of bitterneſs, arrogance, and malice; they would not be raiſing ſuch inſignificant cavils, doubts, and ſcruples, as may be ſtarted againſt every thing that is not capable of mathematical

mathematical demonſtration; in order to unſettle the minds of the ignorant, diſturb the public peace, ſubvert morality, and throw all things into confuſion and diſorder. If none of theſe reflections can have any influence on them, there is one that perhaps may, becauſe it is adapted to their vanity, by which they ſeem to be guided much more than their reaſon, they ſhould therefore conſider, that the wiſeſt and beſt of men in all ages of the world, have been thoſe who lived up to the religion of their country, when they ſaw nothing in it oppoſite to morality, and to the beſt light they had of the divine nature.

Thoſe are very unhappy people who ſet their hearts upon being admired by the multitude, or affect a general and undiſtinguiſhed applauſe, what pious people call the teſtimony of a good conſcience, ſhould be the meaſure of our ambition in this kind, that is to ſay, we ſhould contemn the praiſe of the ignorant, and like being applauded for nothing but what we know in our own hearts we deſerve, beſides which, the character of the perſons who commends us is to be conſidered, before we ſet a value upon their eſteem, the praiſes of the ignorant is only good will, and we ſhould receive their kindneſs as good neighbours in ſociety and not as good judges of our actions, in point of fame and reputation; what makes the love of general praiſe ridiculous

diculous is, that it is uſually given for circumſtances which are foreign to the perſons admired, thus they are the ordinary attendants on power and riches, which may be taken out of one man's hands and put into another's, the application only, and not the poſſeſſion, makes thoſe outward things honourable, the wiſe applaud thoſe whom they think moſt virtuous, the reſt of the world thoſe who are moſt wealthy.

Those who live above their preſent circumſtances are in great danger of living in a little time much beneath them, it ſhould be an indiſputable rule in life, to contract our deſires to our preſent condition, and whatever may be our expectations, to live within the compaſs of what we actually poſſeſs, it will be time enough to enjoy an eſtate when it comes into our hands: but if we anticipate our good fortune, we ſhall looſe the pleaſure of it when it arrives, and may poſſibly never poſſeſs what we have ſo fooliſhly counted upon.

A ſtate of happineſs is not to be aimed at in this life, therefore we ſhould aim at being eaſy inſtead of expecting to be happy, chearfulneſs is always to be ſupported when we are out of pain, but mirth to a prudent perſon ſhould always be accidental, it ſhould naturally ariſe out of the occaſion, and the occaſion ſeldom be laid for it, for thoſe tempers who want mirth to be

be pleaſed, are like the conſtitutions which ſtag without the uſe of brandy. The viciſſitudes of labour and reſt in the lower part of mankind, make their being paſs away with that ſort of reliſh, which we expreſs by the word comfort, innocence, induſtry, and temperance, are acts which lead to tranquillity, as much as learning, wiſdom, knowledge, and contemplation.

It is of the laſt importance to ſeaſon the paſſions of a child with devotion, which ſeldom dies in a mind which has received an early tincture of it, though it may ſeem extinguiſhed for a time by the cares of the world, the heats of youth, or the allurements of vice, it generally breaks out and diſcovers itſelf again, as ſoon as diſcretion, conſideration, age, or misfortune, have brought the man or woman to themſelves, the fire may be covered and overlaid, but cannot be entirely quenched and ſmothered. A ſtate of temperance, ſobriety, and juſtice, without devotion, is a cold, lifeleſs, inſipid condition of virtue, and is rather to be ſtiled philoſophy than religion; devotion opens the mind to great conceptions, and fills it with more ſublime ideas than any that are to be met with in the moſt exalted ſcience, and at the ſame time warms and agitates the ſoul more than ſenſual pleaſure. It has been obſerved by ſome writers, that man is more diſtinguiſhed from the animal world by devotion than by reaſon, as ſeveral

ral brute creatures diſcover in their actions ſomething like a faint glimmering of reaſon, though they betray in no ſingle circumſtance of their behaviour, any thing that bears the leaſt affinity to devotion. It is certain the propenſity of the mind to relious worſhip; the natural tendency of the ſoul to fly to ſome ſuperior being for ſuccour in dangers and diſtreſſes; the gratitude to an inviſible ſuperintendant which ariſes in us, upon receiving any extraordinary and unexpected good fortune, the acts of love and admiration with which the thoughts of men and women, are ſo wonderfully tranſported in meditating upon the divine perfections, and the univerſal concurrence of all the nations under heaven in the great article of adoration, plainly ſhew that devotion or religious worſhip, muſt be the effect of a tradition from ſome great founder of mankind, or that it is conformable to the natural right of reaſon, or that it proceeds from an inſtinct implanted in the ſoul itſelf; theſe are moſt probably all concurrent cauſes, but which ever of them ſhall be aſſigned as the principle of divine worſhip, it manifeſtly points to a ſupreme being as the firſt author of it.

We ſhould be particularly careful to keep our reaſon as cool as poſſible, and to guard ourſelves in all parts of life againſt the influence of paſſion, imagination, and conſtitution.

Modesty allays all thoſe inquietudes and paſſions to which ambition expoſes us, thoſe who are moderate in their wiſhes, from reaſon and choice, and not reſigned from diſtaſte, ſourneſs or diſappointment, double all the pleaſures of life, the air, the ſeaſon, a ſunſhiny day, or a fair proſpect are inſtances of happineſs, and that which they enjoy in common with all the world, by their exemption from the enchantments by which moſt of the world are bewitched, are to them uncommon benefits, and new acquiſitions; health is not eaten up with care, nor pleaſure interrupted by envy; it is not of any conſequence to them what ſome are famed for, or others preferred, they know that there is in ſuch a place an uninterrupted walk, they can meet in ſuch a company an agreeable converſation, they have no emulation, are no ones rival, but wiſh well to all; can look at proſperous people with a pleaſure in the hopes that they are as happy as themſelves, and have their minds and fortunes (as far as prudence will allow) open to the unhappy and to the ſtranger; want of prejudice and command of appetite would make our journey through life eaſy, we ſhould covet no pomp, no admiration; our cloaths ſhould pleaſe us if they are warm and faſhionable; our companions ſhould be agreeable if they are civil and good natured; we ſhould have no occaſion for ſuperfluity at meals, for jollity in company, or for any thing extraordinary

to adminiſter delight to us, we ſhall in all places, meet with more wit, more good cheer, and more good humour than is neceſſary to make us enjoy ourſelves with pleaſure and ſatisfaction.

We ſhould direct our actions in ſuch a manner, that every thing we do, may turn to account at that great day, when every thing we have done will be ſet before us. In order to give this conſideration its full weight, we may caſt all our actions under the diviſion of ſuch as are in themſelves either good, evil, or indifferent; if we divide our intentions after the ſame manner, and conſider them with regard to our actions, we may diſcover the great art and ſecret of religion. A good intention joined to a good action, gives it its proper force and efficacy; joined to an evil action, extenuates its malignity, and in ſome caſes may take it wholly away; and joined to an indifferent action, turns it to virtue, and makes it meritorious as far as human actions can be ſo. In the next place, to conſider in the ſame manner, the influence of an evil intention upon our actions, an evil intention perverts the beſt actions, deſtroys the innocence of an indifferent action, and gives an evil action all poſſible blackneſs and horror. If, in the laſt place, we conſider the nature of an indifferent intention, we ſhall find that it deſtroys the merit of a good action, abates, but never takes away

the malignity of an evil action, and leaves an indifferent action in its natural ſtate of indifference. It is, therefore, of unſpeakable advantage to poſſeſs our minds with an habitual good intention, and to aim all our thoughts, words, and actions, at ſome laudable end, whether it be the glory of our maker, the good of mankind, or the benefit of our own ſouls; this is a ſort of thrift or good huſbandry in moral life, which does not throw away any ſingle action, but makes every one go as far as it can; it multiplies the means of ſalvation, encreaſes the number of our virtues, and diminiſhes that of our vices; a perſon poſſeſſed with an habitual good intention, enters upon no ſingle circumſtance of life without conſidering it as well pleaſing to the great author of his being, conformable to the dictates of reaſon, ſuitable to human nature in general, or to the particular ſtation in which providence has placed him; he lives in a perpetual ſenſe of the divine preſence, regards himſelf as acting in the whole courſe of his exiſtence, under the obſervation and inſpection of that being who is privy to all his motions and all his thoughts, who knows his down-falling and up-riſing, who is about his path, and about his bed, and ſpieth out all his ways, he remembers that the eye of his judge is always upon him, and in every action he reflects that he is doing what is commanded or allowed by him, who will hereafter either reward or puniſh it. This

was the character of thoſe holy men of old, who in that beautiful phraſe of ſcripture are ſaid to have walked with God.

Honours are under no proper regulation in this world, true quality is neglected by virtue being depreſſed and vice triumphant, the laſt day will rectify this diſorder, and aſſign to every one a ſtation ſuitable to the dignity of his character; ranks will be then adjuſted and precedency ſet right, therefore we ſhould aim (if not to advance ourſelves in another world) at leaſt to preſerve our poſt in it, and outſhine our inferiors in virtue here, that they may not be put above us in a ſtate which is to ſettle the diſtinction for eternity; in the mean time, ſince it is neceſſary in the preſent conſtitution of things, that order and diſtinction ſhould be kept up in the world, we ſhould be happy, if thoſe who enjoy the upper ſtations in it, would endeavour to ſurpaſs others in virtue as much as in rank, and by their humanity and condeſcention make this ſuperiority eaſy and acceptable to thoſe who are beneath them; and if on the contrary, thoſe who are in the meaner poſts of life, would conſider how they may better their condition hereafter, and by a juſt deference and ſubmiſſion to their ſuperiors, make them happy in thoſe bleſſings with which providence has thought fit to diſtinguiſh them. We are here as in a theatre, where every one

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has a part allotted him, the great duty which lies upon us is, to act our part in perfection.

HUMANITY, good nature, and the advantages of a liberal education, are incompatible with avarice, tis ſtrange to ſee how ſuddenly this abject paſſion kills all the noble ſentiments and generous ambitions that adorn human nature; it renders a man who is over-run with it, a peeviſh and cruel maſter, a ſevere parent; an unſociable huſband; a diſtant and miſtruſtful friend: As there are frequent inſtances to be met with of a proud humility, ſo this paſſion, contrary to moſt others, affects applauſe by avoiding all ſhew and appearance, for this reaſon it will not ſo much as endure even the common decencies of apparel; a covetous man will call himſelf poor, that you may ſooth his vanity by contradicting him; love and the deſire of glory, as they are the moſt natural, ſo are they capable of being refined into the moſt delicate and rational paſſions.

THE man who is fitted out by nature, and ſent into the world with great abilities, is capable of doing great good or miſchief in it, it ought, therefore, to be the care of education to infuſe into the untainted minds of youth, early notions of juſtice and honour, that ſo the poſſible advantages of good parts may not take an evil turn, nor be perverted to baſe and unworthy

purpoſes; it is the buſineſs of religion and philoſophy, not ſo much to extinguiſh our paſſions, as to regulate and direct them to valuable well choſen objects, when theſe have pointed out to us which courſe we may lawfully ſteer, 'tis no harm to ſet out all our ſail; if the ſtorms and tempeſts of adverſity ſhould ariſe upon us, and not ſuffer us to make the haven where we would be, it will, however, prove no ſmall conſolation to us in theſe circumſtances, that we have neither miſtaken our courſe, nor fallen into calamities of our own procuring.

RELIGION therefore (were we to conſider it no farther than as it interpoſes in the affairs of this life) is highly valuable, and worthy of great veneration; as it ſettles the various pretentions, and otherwiſe interfering intereſts of mortal men, and thereby conſults the harmony and order of the great community; as it gives a man room to play his part, and exert his abilities; as it animates to actions truly laudable in themſelves, and in their effects beneficial to ſociety; as it inſpires rational ambition, correct love and elegant deſires.

On DISCRETION and CUNNING.

THOUGH we have all other perfections, and want diſcretion, we ſhall be of no great conſequence in the world; but if we have this ſingle talent in perfection, and but a common

common ſhare of others, we may do what we pleaſe in our ſtation of life; diſcretion is the moſt uſeful talent we can poſſeſs, but cunning is the accompliſhment of little, mean, ungenerous minds. Diſcretion points out the nobleſt ends to us, and perſues the moſt proper and laudble methods of attaining them; Cunning has only private ſelfiſh aims, and ſticks at nothing which may make them ſucceed. Diſcretion has large and extended views, and like a well formed eye, commands a whole horizon: Cunning is a kind of ſhort ſightedneſs, that diſcovers the minuteſt objects that are near at hand, but is not able to diſcern things at a diſtance. Diſcretion, the more it is diſcovered, gives the greater authority to the perſon who poſſeſſes it: Cunning when it is once detected, loſes its force, and makes the poſſeſſors incapable of bringing about even thoſe events which they might have done, had they paſſed only for plain people; Diſcretion is the perfection of reaſon, and a guide to us in all the duties of life; Cunning is a kind of inſtinct that only looks out after our immediate intereſt and welfare. Diſcretion is only found in perſons of ſtrong ſenſe and good underſtandings. Cunning is often to be met with in brutes themſelves, and in thoſe people who are but the feweſt removes from them; in ſhort, Cunning is only the mimick of Diſcretion, and may paſs upon weak men, in the ſame manner, as vivacity is often miſ-

taken for wit, and gravity for wiſdom. The caſt of mind which is natural to diſcreet perſons makes them look forward into futurity, and conſider what will be their condition millions of ages hence, as well as what is at preſent; they know that the miſery, or happineſs which are reſerved for them in another world looſe nothing of their reality, by being placed at ſo great a diſtance from them; the objects do not appear little to them becauſe they are remote, they conſider that thoſe pleaſures and pains, which lie hid in eternity, approach nearer to them every moment, and will be preſent with them in their full weight and meaſure, as much as thoſe pains and pleaſures which they feel at this very inſtant; for this reaſon they are careful to ſecure to themſelves that which is the proper happineſs of their nature, and the ultimate deſign of their being, they carry their thoughts to the end of every action, and conſider the moſt diſtant, as well as the moſt immediate effects of it; they ſuperſede every little proſpect of gain and advantage which offers itſelf here, if they do not find it conſiſtent with their views of an hereafter; in a word, their hopes are full of immortality, their ſchemes are large and glorious, and their conduct ſuitable to thoſe who know their true iutereſt, and how to purſue it by proper methods.

THERE are many virtues which in their own

own nature are incapable of any outward repreſentation; many ſilent perfections in the ſoul of a good perſon which are great ornaments to human nature, but not able to diſcover themſelves to the knowledge of others; they are tranſacted in private, without noiſe and ſhow, and are only viſible to the great ſearcher of hearts: what actions can expreſs the entire purity of thought which refines and ſanctifies virtuous perſons; that ſecret reſt and contentedneſs of mind, which gives them a perfect enjoyment of their preſent condition; that inward pleaſure and complacency, which they feel in doing good; that delight and ſatisfaction which they take in the proſperity and happineſs of others; theſe and the like virtues are the hidden beauties of a ſoul, the ſecret graces which cannot be diſcovered by a mortal eye, but make the ſoul lovely and precious in his ſight, from whom no ſecrets are concealed.

It is eaſier for an artful man who is not in love, to perſuade his miſtreſs he has a paſſion for her, and to ſucceed in his perſuits, than for one who loves with the greateſt violence; true love hath ten thouſand griefs, impatiencies, and reſentments, that render the man unamiable in the eyes of the perſon whoſe affection he ſolicits; beſides, that it ſinks his figure, gives him fears, apprehenſions, and poorneſs of ſpirit, and often makes him appear ridiculous,

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where he has a mind to recommend himſelf.

Those marriages generally abound moſt with love and conſtancy, that are preceded by a long courtſhip; the paſſion ſhould ſtrike root and gather ſtrength, before marriage be grafted on it; a long courſe of hopes and expectations fixes the idea in our minds, and habituates us to a fondneſs of the perſon beloved. The good qualities of the perſon we join ourſelves to for life is of the utmoſt importance to our preſent and future happineſs; good nature and evenneſs of temper will give you an eaſy companion for life; virtue and good ſenſe, an agreeable friend; love and conſtancy, a good wife or huſband. Where we meet one perſon with all theſe virtues, we find a hundred without any one of them; the world notwithſtanding is more intent on trains and equipages, and all the ſhowy parts of life, we love rather to dazzle the multitude than conſult or proper intereſt; it is one of the moſt unaccountable paſſions of human nature, that we are at greater pains to appear eaſy and happy to others, than really to make ourſelves ſo. Of all diſparaties, that in humour, makes the moſt unhappy marriages, yet ſcarce enters our thoughts at the conſtructing of them; ſeveral that are in this reſpect unequally yoaked and uneaſy for life, with a perſon of a particular character, might have been pleaſed and happy with a perſon of a contrary one, notwithſtanding

ſtanding they are both perhaps equally virtuous and laudable in their kind. Before marriage we cannot be too inquiſitive and diſcerning in the faults of the perſon beloved, nor after it, too dimſighted and ſuperficial; a happy marriage has in it all the pleaſures of friendſhip, all the enjoyments of ſenſe and reaſon, and indeed all the ſweets of life; but it can be only happy to thoſe who tread the paths of life together, in a conſtant uniform courſe of virtue.

No vice or wickedneſs which people fall into, from indulgence to deſires which are natural to all, ought to place them below the compaſſion of the virtuous part of the world, which often gives room for ſuſpicions of thoſe, who are too warmly provoked at other peoples perſonal ſins; the unlawful commerce of the ſexes, is of all others the hardeſt to be avoided, and yet there is no one, which the rigider part of woman kind ſpeak of with ſo little mercy; it is certain that a modeſt woman cannot abhor the breach of chaſtity too much, but let her hate it for herſelf, and only pity it in others.

THERE are few perſons, who if they will reflect on their paſt lives, will not find, that had they ſaved all thoſe little ſums which they have ſpent unneceſſarily, they might at preſent have been poſſeſſed of competent fortunes.

We ſhould every one conſider that we are in this life nothing more than paſſengers, and that we are not to ſet up our reſt here, but to keep an attentive eye upon that ſtate of being to which we approach every moment, and which will be forever fixed and permanent; this ſingle conſideration would be ſufficient to extinguiſh the bitterneſs of hatred, the thirſt of avarice, and the cruelty of ambition.

We ought not to grieve above meaſure for our deceaſed friends, when we conſider they are not dead, but have only finiſhed that journey which every one of us muſt take, we ourſelves muſt ſoon go to that great place of reception, in which they are all aſſembled, and live together in another ſtate of being.

USEFUL ITALIAN PROVERBS.

Never do that by proxy which you can do yourſelf; never defer that till to-morrow, which you can do to-day; never neglect ſmall matters and expences.

It is a very melancholly reflection that people are uſually ſo weak, that it is abſolutely neceſſary for them to know ſorrow and pain to be in their right ſenſes; proſperous people (for happy there are none) are hurried away with a fond ſenſe of their preſent condition, and thoughtleſs of the mutability of fortune.

The diſpoſition of a mind which is truely great, is that which makes misfortunes and ſorrows little, when they befall ourſelves, great and lamentable when they befall others.

A temperate and well governed mind looks on ſuch as are exalted with ſucceſs, with a certain ſhame, for the imbecility of human nature, that can ſo far forget how liable it is to calamity, as to grow giddy with only the ſuſpence of ſorrow, which is the portion of all; thoſe therefore who turn their face from the unhappy, who ſhun affliction like a contagion, do but pamper themſelves up for a ſacrifice; the proper education we ſhould give to ourſelves, is, to be prepared for the evil events and accidents we are to meet with in a life ſentenced to be a ſcene of ſorrow; but inſtead of this expectation, we ſoften ourſelves with proſpects of conſtant delight, and deſtroy in our minds the ſeeds of fortitude and virtue, which ſhould ſupport us in hours of anguiſh; the conſtant purſuit of pleaſure, has in it ſomething inſolent and improper for our being, loud mirth, or immoderate ſorrow, inequality of behaviour, either in proſperity or adverſity, are alike ungraceful in man who is born to die; moderation in both circumſtances is peculiar to generous minds; people of that ſort, ever taſte the gratification of health, and all other advantages of life, as if they were liable to

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part with them, and when bereft of them, reſign them with a greatneſs of mind which ſhews they know their value and duration: The contempt of pleaſure is a certain preparatory for the contempt of pain, without this, the mind is as it were taken ſuddenly, by an unforeſeen even, but thoſe that have always, during health and proſperity, been abſtinent in their ſatisfactions, enjoy in the worſt of difficulties, the reflection that their anguiſh is not aggravated, with the compariſon of paſt pleaſures, which upbraid their preſent condition.

INDOLENCE is a ſtream which flows ſlowly on, but yet undermines the foundation of every virtue, it gives a tincture of its nature to every action of the perſons infected with it, and it is to no purpoſe to have within us the ſeeds of a thouſand good qualities, if we want the vigour and reſolution neceſſary for the exerting them; to-morrow is ſtill the fatal time when all is to be rectified, to-morrow comes, it goes, and ſtill they pleaſe themſelves with the ſhadow, whilſt they loſe the reality, unmindful that the preſent time alone is ours, the future is yet unborn, and the paſt is dead, and can only live (as parents in their children) in the actions it has produced; thouſands ſpend more time in an idle uncertainty, which to begin firſt of two affairs, than would have been ſufficient to have ended them both.

TRUTH and reality have all the advantages of appearance, and many more; if the ſhew of any thing be good for any thing, certainly ſincerity is better; for why do people diſſemble, or ſeem to be that which they are not? but becauſe they think it good to have ſuch qualities as they pretend to; for to counterfeit and diſſemble is to put on the appearance of ſome real excellency; the beſt way in the world for people to ſeem to be any thing, is really to be what they would ſeem to be, for beſides that it is many times as troubleſome to make good the pretence of a good quality as to have it, and if they have it not, it is ten to one, but they are diſcovered to want it, and then all their pains and labour to ſeem to have it is loſt; it is hard to perſonate and act a part long, for where truth is not always at the bottom nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray herſelf one time or other; therefore let thoſe who think it convenient to ſeem good, be ſo indeed, and then their goodneſs will appear to every body's ſatisfaction, ſo that upon all accounts ſincerity is true wiſdom, particularly as to the affairs of this world; integrity hath many advantages over all the fine and artificial ways of diſſimulation and deceit; it is much the plainer and eaſier, much the ſafer and more ſecure way of dealing in the world; it has leſs of trouble and difficulty, of entanglement and perplexity, of danger and hazard in it; it

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is the ſhorteſt and neareſt way to our end, carrying us thither in a ſtraight line, and will hold out and laſt longeſt. The arts of deceit and cunning do continually grow weaker, and leſs effectual and ſerviceable to thoſe who uſe them; whereas integrity gains ſtrength by uſe, and the more and longer people practice it, the greater ſervice it does them, by confirming their reputation and encouraging thoſe with whom they have to do, to repoſe the greateſt truſt and confidence in them, which is an unſpeakable advantage in the buſineſs and affairs of life. Truth is always conſiſtent with itſelf, and needs nothing to help it out, it is always near and at hand, and ſits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware; whereas a lie is troubleſome, and ſets our invention upon the rack, and one trick needs a great many more to make it good; it is building upon a falſe foundation, which continually ſtands in need of props to keep it up, and proves at laſt, more chargeable than to have raiſed a ſubſtantial building at firſt, upon a true and ſolid foundation; for ſincerity is firm and ſubſtantial, and there is nothing hollow or unſound in it, and becauſe it is plain and open, fears no diſcovery; of which crafty people are always in danger, and when they think they walk in the dark all their pretences are ſo tranſparent, that he who runs may read them; they are the laſt who find themſelves to be found out, and whilſt they take

take it for granted, that they make fools of others, they render themſelves ridiculous; add to all this, that ſincerity is the moſt compendious wiſdom, and an excellent inſtrument for the ſpeedy diſpatch of buſineſs; it creates confidence in thoſe we have to deal with, ſaves the labour of many enquiries, and brings things to an iſſue in few words; it is like travelling in plain beaten roads, which commonly brings people to their journey's end ſooner than by ways in which they often looſe themſelves: in a word, whatever convenience may be thought to be in falſhood and diſſimulation, it is ſoon over, but the inconvenience of it is perpetual, becauſe it brings people under an everlaſting jealouſy and ſuſpicion, ſo that they are not believed when they ſpeak truth, nor truſted, when perhaps they mean honeſtly; when they have once forfeited the reputation of their integrity, they are ſet faſt, and nothing will then ſerve their turn, neither truth nor falſhood: Let us make uſe of truth and ſincerity in all our words and actions, for nothing but this will laſt and hold out to the end; all other arts will fail, but truth and integrity will carry us through, and bear us out to the laſt.

Power is weakened by the full uſe of it, but extended by moderation.

Chearfulness is preferable to mirth, the latter is an act, the former is a habit of

the mind. Mirth is ſhort and tranſient; Chearfulneſs fixed and permanent; thoſe are often raiſed into the greateſt tranſports of mirth who are ſubject to the greateſt depreſſions of melancholy. Thoſe who live according to the dictates of virtue and right reaſon, have two perpetual ſources of chearfulneſs in the conſideration of their own nature, and of that being on whom they depend; if they look into themſelves, they cannot but rejoice in that exiſtence which is ſo lately beſtowed upon them, and which after millions of ages, will be ſtill new and ſtill in its beginning; how many ſelf congratulations naturally ariſe in the mind, when it reflects on this its entrance into eternity, when it takes a view of thoſe improveable faculties which in a few years, and even at its firſt ſetting out, have made ſo conſiderable a progreſs, and which will be ſtill receiving an increaſe of perfection, and conſequently an increaſe of happineſs; the conſciouſneſs of ſuch a being, ſpreads a perpetual diffuſion of joy through the ſouls of the virtuous, and makes them look upon themſelves every moment as more happy than they know how to conceive.

The ſecond ſource of Chearfulneſs to a good mind, is its conſideration of that being on whom we have our dependance, and in whom tho' we behold him as yet, but in the firſt faint diſcoveries of his perfections, we ſee every thing that we can imagine as great,

great, glorious, or amiable, we find ourſelves every where upheld by his goodneſs, and ſurrounded with an imenſity of love and mercy; in ſhort, we depend upon a being whoſe power qualifies him to make us happy by an infinity of means, whoſe goodneſs and truth, engage him to make thoſe happy who deſire it of him, and whoſe unchangeableneſs will ſecure us in this happineſs to all eternity. Such conſiderations, which every one ſhould perpetually cheriſh in their thoughts, will baniſh from us all that ſecret heavineſs of heart, which unthinking people are ſubject to, when they lie under no real afflictions, and all that unquiet which we may feel from any evil that actually oppreſſes us, and eſtabliſh in us ſuch an even and chearful temper, as makes us pleaſing to ourſelves, to thoſe with whom we converſe, and to him whom we were made to pleaſe; Chearfulneſs is a promoter of health, repinings and ſecret murmers of the heart, give impreceptible ſtrokes to thoſe delicate fibres of which the vital parts are compoſed, and wear out the machine inſenſibly. The world in which we are placed, is filled with innumerable objects proper to raiſe and keep alive this happy temper of mind, if we conſider this world in its natural beauty and harmony, we ſhall be apt to think it was made for our pleaſure; the ſun which is the great ſoul of the univerſe, and produces all the neceſſaries of life, has a particular influence

in chearing our minds, and making our hearts glad: thoſe ſeveral living creatures which are made for our ſervice, or ſuſtenance, at the ſame time either fill the woods with their muſic, furniſh us with game, or raiſe pleaſing ideas in us by the delightfulneſs of their appearance.

FOUNTAINS, lakes, and rivers, are as refreſhing to the imagination as to the ſoil through which they paſs, providence has taken care to keep up a chearfulneſs in the mind, by having formed it after ſuch a manner, as to make it capable of receiving delight from ſeveral objects which ſeem to have very little uſe in them, as from the wildneſs of rocks and deſarts, and the like groteſque parts of nature; in ſhort, the whole univerſe is a kind of theatre filled with objects that either raiſe in us pleaſure, amazement, or admiration, the viciſſitudes of day and night, the change of ſeaſons, with all that variety of ſcenes which diverſify the face of nature, and fill the mind with a perpetual ſucceſſion of beautiful and pleaſing images, add to this the ſeveral entertainments of art, the pleaſures of friendſhip, books, converſation, and other accidental diverſions of life; which may be ſufficient to ſhew us that providence did not deſign this world ſhould be filled with miſeries and repinings, or that our hearts ſhould be involved in gloom, and melancholy.

At the ſame time it muſt be owned, that there are many evils which naturally ſpring up amidſt the entertainments that are provided for us, but theſe, if rightly conſidered, ſhould be far from overcaſting the mind with ſorrow, or deſtroying our chearfulneſs of temper, the interpoſition of evil with good, and pain with pleaſure in the works of nature, is very truly aſcribed by Mr. Locke, in his Eſſay on Human Underſtanding to a moral reaſon, in the following words:

"Beyond all this we may find another "reaſon, why God hath ſcattered up and "down ſeveral degrees of pleaſure and "pain in all the things that environ and "affect us, and blended them together in "almoſt all that our thoughts and ſenſes "have to do with; that we finding imper-"fection, diſſatisfaction, and want of com-"pleat happineſs in all the enjoyments "which the creature can afford us, might "be led to ſeek it in the enjoyment of him "with whom there is fulneſs of joy, and "at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures "for evermore."

The creation is a perpetual feaſt to a good mind, providence has imprinted ſo many ſmiles on nature, that it is impoſſible for thoſe who are not ſunk in more groſs and ſenſual delights, to take a ſurvey of them, without ſeveral ſecret ſenſations of

pleaſure. Natural philoſophy quickens this taſte of the creation, and renders it not only pleaſing to the imagination, but to the underſtanding; it does not reſt in the melody of birds and the murmurs of brooks, in the ſhade of groves and woods, or in the embroidery of fields and meadows, but conſiders the ſeveral ends of providence which are ſerved by them, and the wonders of divine wiſdom which appear in them; it heightens the pleaſures of the eye, and raiſes ſuch a rational admiration in the ſoul, as is little inferior to devotion; when we find ourſelves inſpired with this pleaſing inſtinct, this ſecret ſatisfaction and complacency ariſing from the beauties of the creation, let us conſider to whom we ſtand indebted for all theſe entertainments of ſenſe, and who it is that thus opens his hand and fills the world with good; the chearfulneſs of heart which ſprings up in us from the ſurvey of nature's work, is an admirable preparation for gratitude, the mind has gone a great way towards praiſe and thankſgiving that is filled with ſuch a ſecret gladneſs, a greatful reflection on the ſupreme cauſe who produces it, ſanctifies it in the ſoul, and gives it its proper value; ſuch an habitual diſpoſition of mind conſecrets every field and wood, turns an ordinary walk into a morning or evening ſacrifice, and will improve thoſe tranſient gleams of joy, which naturally brighten up and refreſh the ſoul, on ſuch occaſions, into

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an inviolable and perpetual ſtate of bliſs and happineſs.

It is a certain ſign of an ill heart, to be inclined to defamation, they who are harmleſs and innocent, can have no gratification that way, but it ever ariſes from a neglect of what is laudable in themſelves, and an impatience of ſeeing it in others; elſe why ſhould merit provoke, or beauty diſpleaſe in ſuch a degree, that people given to ſcandal, never let the mention of either paſs by, without offering ſomething to the diminution of it. Nothing is ſo ſwift as ſcandal, nothing is more eaſily ſent abroad, nothing received with more welcome, nothing diffuſes itſelf more univerſally; when any thing is advanced by thoſe who cannot tell where they had it, or have forgot who told it them, all ſuch teſtimonies ſhould be thought too ſlight, to have any credit againſt the innocence and honours of our fellow creatures.

It is an impertinent and unreaſonable fault in converſation, for one perſon to take up all the diſcourſe.

The neceſſities of mankind require various employments, and whoever excels in his province, is worthy of praiſe; all people are not educated after the ſame manner, nor have all the ſame talents, thoſe who are deficient, deſerve our compaſſion,

and have a title to our aſſiſtance, all cannot be bred in the ſame place, but in all places there ariſe at different times, ſuch perſons as do honour to their ſociety.

Good ſenſe and good nature always go together.

We ſhould never encourage thoſe officious friends that would be telling us every malicious report, every idle cenſure that is paſſed upon us; people's tongues are ſo petulent, and their thoughts ſo variable, that one ſhould not lay too great ſtreſs upon any preſent ſpeeches and opinions; praiſe and obliquy proceed very frequently out of the ſame mouth, upon the ſame perſon, and upon the ſame occaſion, a generous enemy will ſometimes beſtow commendations; as the deareſt friend cannot, ſometimes refrain from ſpeaking ill; thoſe who are indifferent in theſe reſpects, give their opinion at random, and praiſe or diſapprove as they find themſelves in humour.

Man conſidered in himſelf, is a very helpleſs and a very wretched being, he is ſubject every moment to the greateſt calamities and misfortunes, he is beſet with dangers on all ſides, and may become unhappy by numberleſs caſualties, which he could not foreſee nor have prevented, had he foreſeen them; it is our comfort while we are obnoxious to ſo many accidents, that

that we are under the care of one who directs contingencies, and has in his hands the management of every thing that is capable of annoying or offending us; who knows the aſſiſtance we ſtand in need of, and is always ready to beſtow it on thoſe who aſk it of him:

The natural homage which ſuch a creature bears to ſo infinitely wiſe and good a being, is a firm reliance on him for the bleſſings and conveniences of life, and an habitual truſt in him for deliverance out of all ſuch dangers and difficulties as may befall us. The man who always lives in this diſpoſition of mind, has not the ſame dark and melancholy views of human nature, as he who conſiders himſelf abſtractly from this relation to the ſupreme being; at the ſame time, that he reflects upon his own weakneſs and imperfection, he comforts himſelf with the contemplation of thoſe divine attributes, which are employed for his ſafety and welfare, he finds his want of foreſight made up by the omniſcience of him who is his ſupport; he is not ſenſible of his own want of ſtrength, when he knows that his helper is almighty; in ſhort, the perſon who has a firm truſt in the ſupreme being, is powerful in his power, wiſe by his wiſdom, happy by his happineſs; he reaps the benefit of every divine attribute, and loſes his own inſufficiency in the fulneſs of infinite perfection; to make our lives more

eaſy

eaſy to us, we are commanded to put our truſt in him, who is thus able to relieve and and ſuccour us; the divine goodneſs having made ſuch a reliance a duty, notwithſtanding we ſhould have been miſerable had it been forbidden us; among ſeveral motives which might be made uſe of to recommend this duty to us, the firſt, and ſtrongeſt is, that we are promiſed he will not fail thoſe who put their truſt in him, but without conſidering the ſupernatural bleſſing which accompanies this duty, we may obſerve that it has a natural tendency to its own reward, or in other words, that this firm truſt and confidence in the great diſpoſer of all things, contributes very much to the getting clear of any affliction, or to the bearing it manfully; ſuch a truſt in the aſſiſtance of an almighty being, naturally produces patience, hope, chearfulneſs, and all other diſpoſitions of mind, that alleviate thoſe calamities which we are not able to remove; the practiſe of this virtue adminiſters great comfort to the mind of man, in times of poverty and affliction, but moſt of all in the hour of death, when the ſoul is hovering in the laſt moments of its ſeparation, when it is juſt entering on another ſtate of exiſtence, to converſe with ſcenes and objects and companions that are altogether new, what can ſupport her under ſuch tremblings of thought, ſuch fears, ſuch anxiety, ſuch apprehenſions, but the caſting of all her cares upon him, who firſt gave her being,

being, who has conducted her through one ſtage of it, and will be always with her, to guide and comfort her in her progreſs thro' eternity.

THE Lord my paſture ſhall prepare,
And feed me with a ſhepherd's care;
His preſence ſhall my wants ſupply,
And guard me with a watchful eye;
My noon-day walks he ſhall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.
When in the ſultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirſty mountain pant;
To fertile vales and dewy meads,
My weary, wand'ring ſteps he leads;
Where peaceful rivers ſoft and ſlow,
Amid the verdant landſcape flow;
Tho' in the paths of death I tread,
With gloomy horrors overſpread,
My ſtedfaſt heart ſhall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord, art with me ſtill;
Thy friendly crook ſhall give me aid,
And guide me through the dreadful ſhade;
Tho' in a bare and rugged way,
Through devious lonely wilds I ſtray,
Thy bounty ſhall my pains beguile,
The barren wilderneſs ſhall ſmile;
With ſudden greens and herbage crown'd,
And ſtreams ſhall murmur all around.

THERE is not a more pleaſing exerciſe of the mind than gratitude, it is accompanied with ſuch an infinite ſatisfaction, that the duty is ſufficiently rewarded by the performance;

formance; it is not like the practiſe of many other virtues, difficult and painful; but attended with ſo much pleaſure, that were there no poſitive command which enjoined it, nor any recompence laid up for it hereafter, a generous mind would indulge in it for the natural gratification that accompanies it: if gratitude is due from man to man, how much more from man to his maker; the ſupreme being does not only confer upon us thoſe bounties which proceed more immediately from his hand, but even thoſe benefits which are conveyed to us by others; every bleſſing we enjoy, by what means ſoever it may be derived upon us, is the gift of him who is the great author of good and father of mercies. If gratitude when exerted towards one another, naturally produces a very pleaſing ſenſation in the mind of a grateful man, it exalts the ſoul into rapture when it is employed on this great object of gratitude, on this beneficent being who has given us every thing we already poſſeſs, and from whom we expect every thing we yet hope for.

I.

When all thy mercits, O my God,
My riſing ſoul ſurveys;
Tranſported with the view, I'm loſt
In wonder, love, and praiſe;

II.

O how ſhall words with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare,

That

That glows within my raviſh'd heart;
But thou canſt read it there.

III.

Thy providence my life ſuſtain'd,
And all my wants redreſt.
When in the ſilent womb I lay,
And hung upon the breaſt.

IV.

To all my weak complaints and cries,
Thy mercy lent an ear,
E'er yet my feeble thoughts had learnt,
To form themſelves in prayer.

V.

Unnumber'd comforts to my ſoul,
Thy tender care beſtow'd;
Before my infant heart conceiv'd
From whom thoſe comforts flow'd.

VI.

When in the ſlipp'ry paths of youth,
With heedleſs ſteps I ran,
Thine arm unſeen convey'd me ſafe,
And led me up to man.

VII.

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
If gently clear'd my way,
And through the pleaſing ſnares of vice,
More to be fear'd than they.

VIII.

When worn with ſickneſs oft haſt thou,
With health renew'd my face,

And

And when in ſins and ſorrow ſunk,
Reviv'd my ſoul with grace.

IX.

Thy bounteous hand with worldly bliſs.
Has made my cup run o'er,
And in a kind, and faithful friend,
Has doubled all my ſtore.

X.

Ten thouſand thouſand precious gifts,
My daily thoughts employ,
Nor is the leaſt a chearful heart,
That taſtes thoſe gifts with joy.

XI.

Through ev'ry period of my life,
Thy goodneſs I'll perſue;
And after death, in diſtant worlds,
The glorious theme renew.

XII.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide thy works no more,
My ever grateful heart, O Lord,
Thy mercy ſhall adore.

XIII.

Through all eternity to thee
A joyful ſong I'll raiſe,
For O; eternity's too ſhort
To utter all thy praiſe.

NOTHING can be more unhappy than the condition of bankruptcy, the calamities which happen to us by ill fortune, or by the

the injuries of others, has in it ſome conſolation; but what ariſes from our own misbehaviour or error, is a ſtate of the moſt exquiſite ſorrow; when we conſider not only an ample fortune, but even the very neceſſaries of life, our pretence to food itſelf, at the mercy of our creditors, we cannot but look upon ourſelves in the ſtate of the dead, with our caſe thus much worſe, that the laſt office is performed by our adverſaries inſtead of our friends. From this hour the cruel world does not only take poſſeſſion of our whole fortune, but even of every thing elſe which had no relation to it; all our indifferent actions have new interpretations put upon them, and thoſe whom we have favoured in our former life, diſcharge themſelves of their obligations to us, by joining in the reproaches of our enemies.

The man who wants mercy, has no taſte of any kind of enjoyment, there is a natural diſreliſh of every thing which is good in his very nature, and he is born an enemy to the world; he his ever extremely partial to himſelf in all his actions, and has no ſenſe of iniquity but from the puniſhment which ſhall attend it: the law of the land is his goſpel, and all his caſes of conſcience are determined by his attorney. Such men know not what it is to gladden the heart of the miſerable.

Riches are the inſtruments of ſerving the

the purpoſes of heaven or hell, according to the diſpoſition of the poſſeſſor; the wealthy can torment or gratify all who are in their power, and chuſe to do one or other, as they are affected with love and hatred to mankind. As for ſuch who are inſenſible of the concerns of others, but merely as they affect themſelves, theſe men are to be valued only for their mortality, and as we hope better things from theirs.

NOTHING is more amiable than true modeſty, and nothing is more contemptible than the falſe; the one guards virtue, the other betrays it; true modeſty is aſhamed to do any thing that is repugnant to the rules of right reaſon; falſe modeſty is aſhamed to do any thing that is oppoſite to the humour of the company: true modeſty avoids every thing that is criminal; falſe modeſty every thing that is unfaſhionable: the latter is only a general undetermined inſtinct; the former is that inſtinct limitted and circumſcribed by the rules of prudence and religion. We may conclude that modeſty to be falſe and vicious, which engages us to do any thing that is ill, or indiſcreet, or which reſtrains us from doing any thing that is of a contrary nature; how many men in the common concerns of life, lend ſums of money which they are not able to ſpare, are bound for perſons whom they have but little friendſhip for, give recommendatory characters of men they are ſcarce acquainted

acquainted with, live in ſuch a manner as they themſelves do not approve, and all this, merely becauſe they have not the confidence to reſiſt ſolicitation, importunity, or example; nor does this falſe modeſty expoſe us only to ſuch actions as are indiſcreet, but very often to ſuch as are highly criminal: a man of vicious modeſty complies with every thing, and is only fearful of doing what may look ſingular in the company where he is engaged; he falls in with the torrent, and lets himſelf go to every action, or diſcourſe, however unjuſtifiable in itſelf, ſo it be in vogue among the preſent party; this, though one of the moſt common, is one of the moſt ridiculous diſpoſitions in human nature, that men ſhould not be aſhamed of ſpeaking in a diſſolute or irrational manner, but that one who is in their company, ſhould be aſhamed of governing himſelf by the principles of reaſon and virtue. A modeſt young man who was at an entertainment, though he was not uſed to drink, had not the confidence to refuſe his glaſs in his turn, when on a ſudden he became ſo fluſtered that he took all the talk of the table to himſelf, abuſed every one of the company, and flung a bottle at the gentleman's head who treated him.

Religion may be conſidered under two general heads: The firſt comprehends what we are to believe; the other what we are to

practice. By thoſe things which we are to believe is meant, whatever is revealed to us in the holy writings, and which we could not have obtained the knowledge of by the light of nature; by the things which we are to practice, is meant all thoſe duties to which we are directed by reaſon or natural religion. Many perſons lay ſo great a ſtreſs upon faith that they neglect morality; and many build ſo much upon morality, that they do not pay a due regard to faith. The perfect man ſhould not be defective in either of theſe particulars, as will be evident to thoſe who conſider the benefits which ariſe from each of them; notwithſtanding this general diviſion of Chriſtian duty into morality and fa th, and that they have both their peculiar excellencies, the firſt has the pre-eminence in ſeveral reſpects.

First, becauſe the greateſt part of morality is of a fixed eternal nature, and will endure when faith ſhall fail, and be loſt in conviction.

Secondly, becauſe a perſon may be qualified to do greater good to mankind, and become more beneficial to the world, by morality without faith, than by faith without morality.

Thirdly, becauſe morality gives a greater perfection to human nature, by quieting the mind, moderating the paſſions, and

and advancing the happineſs of every man in his private capacity.

FOURTHLY, becauſe the rule of morality is much more certain than that of faith, all the civilized nations of the world agreeing in the great points of morality as much as they differ in thoſe of faith.

FIFTHLY, becauſe infidelity is not of ſo malignant a nature as immorality; or to put the ſame reaſon in another light, becauſe it is generally owned there may be ſalvation for a virtuous infidel, particularly in the caſe of invincible ignorance, but none for a vicious believer.

SIXTHLY, becauſe faith ſeems to draw its principal if not all its excellency, from the influence it has upon morality, as we ſhall ſee more at large, if we conſider wherein conſiſts the excellency of faith or the belief of revealed religion; and this is firſt, in explaining and carrying to greater heights ſeveral points of morality.

SECONDLY, in furniſhing new and ſtronger motives to inforce the practice of morality.

THIRDLY, in giving us more amiable ideas of the ſupreme being, more endearing notions of one another, and a truer ſtate of ourſelves, both in regard to the grandeur and vileneſs of our natures.

FOURTLY, by ſhewing us the blackneſs and deformity of vice, which in the Chriſtian ſyſtem is ſo very great, that he who is poſſeſſed of all perfection, and the ſovereign judge of it, is repreſented by ſeveral of our divines, as hating ſin to the ſame degree, that he loves the ſacred perſon who was made the propitiation of it.

FIFTHLY, in being the ordinary and preſcribed method of making morality effectual to ſalvation.

IT is obvious we cannot be perfect in our ſcheme of morality, if we do not ſtrengthen and ſupport it, with that of the Chriſtian faith.

WE ſhould be particularly cautious of making any thing an article of faith, which does not contribute to the confirmation or improvement of morality.

No article of faith can be true and authentic, which weakens or ſubverts the practical part of religion.

THE greateſt friend of morality, or natural religion, cannot poſſibly apprehend any danger from embracing Chriſtianity as it is preſerved pure and uncorrupt, in the doctrines of our national church.

THERE is likewiſe another maxim which may be drawn from the foregoing conſiderations,

ations, which is, that we ſhould in all dubious points, conſider any ill conſequences that may ariſe from them, ſuppoſing they ſhould be erroneous before we give up our aſſent to them, for example, in that diſputable point of perſecuting men for conſcience ſake, beſides the imbittering their minds with hatred, indignation, and all the vehemence of reſentment, and enſnaring them to profeſs what they do not believe; we cut them off from the pleaſures and advantages of ſociety, afflict their bodies, diſtreſs their fortunes, hurt their reputations, ruin their families, make their lives painful, or put an end to them; ſure when we ſee ſuch dreadful conſequences riſing from a principle, one would be as fully convinced of the truth of it, as of a mathematical demonſtration, before I would venture to act upon it, or make it a part of my religion. In this caſe the injury done to our neighbour is plain and evident, the principle that puts as upon doing it of a dubious and diſputable nature; morality is highly violated by the one, and whether or no, a zeal for what a man thinks the true ſyſtem of faith may juſtify it, is very uncertain; if our religion produce charity as well as zeal, it will not be for ſhewing it ſelf in ſuch cruel inſtances.

Those who delight in reading books of controverſy, which are written on both ſides of the queſtion in points of faith, do

very ſeldom arrive at a fixed and ſettled habit of it; they are one day entirely convinced of its important truths, and the next meet with ſomething that ſhakes and diſturbs them; the doubt which was laid revives again and ſhews itſelf in new difficulties; and that generally for this reaſon, becauſe the mind which is perpetually loſt in controverſies and diſputes, is apt to forget the reaſons which had once ſet it at reſt, and to be diſquieted with any former perplexity, when it appears in a new ſhape, or is ſtated by a different hand.

As nothing is more laudable than an enquiry after truth, ſo nothing is more irrational, than to paſs away our whole lives, without determining ourſelves one way or other in thoſe points, which are of the laſt importance to us; there are indeed many things from which we may with-hold our aſſent; but in caſes by which we are to regulate our lives, it is the greateſt abſurdity to be wavering and unſetled, without cloſing with that ſide which appears the moſt ſafe, and the moſt probable. The firſt rule we ſhould lay down, therefore, ſhould be this, that when by reading or diſcourſe, we find ourſelves thoroughly convinced of the truth of any article, and of the reaſonableneſs of our belief in it, we ſhould never after ſuffer ourſelves to call it into queſtion. We may perhaps forget the arguments which occaſioned our conviction, but we ought to remember the ſtrength they had with us, and therefore

therefore ſtill to retain the conviction which they once produced. This is no more than what we do in every common art or ſcience, nor is it poſſible to act otherwiſe, conſidering the weakneſs and limitation of our intellectual faculties. This rule is abſolutely neceſſary for weaker minds, and in ſome meaſure, for men of the greateſt abilities, but theſe latter ſhould always keep in their memories thoſe argument which appeared to them of the greateſt ſtrength and which cannot be got over by all the doubts and cavils of infidelity.

THERE is nothing which ſtrengthens faith more than morality, faith and morality naturally produce each other; a man is quickly convinced of the truth of religion, if he finds that it is not againſt his intereſt that it ſhould be true, the pleaſure he receives at preſent, and the happineſs which he promiſes himſelf from it hereafter, will both diſpoſe him very powerfully to give credit to it; according to the ordinary obſervation that we are eaſy to believe what we wiſh.

I.

The ſpacious firmament on high,
With all the blue etherial ſky,
And ſpangled heavens, a ſhining frame,
Their great original proclaim;
Th' unwearied ſun, from day to day,
Does his creator's pow'r diſplay,

And

And publiſhes to ev'ry land,
The work of an Almighty hand.

II.

Soon as the evening ſhades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wond'rous tale;
And nightly to the liſt'ning earth,
Repeats the ſtory of her birth;
Whilſt all the ſtars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll;
And ſpread the earth from pole to pole.

III.

What tho' in ſolemn ſilence, all,
Move round the dark terreſtrial ball;
What tho' nor real voice nor ſound
Amid their radiant orbs be found;
In reaſon's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever ſinging as they ſhine,
The hand that made us is divine.

It is very certain that a man of ſound reaſon cannot forbear cloſing with religion upon an impartial examination of it; but at the ſame time it is as certain, that faith is kept alive in us, and gathers ſtrength from practice, more than from ſpeculation. There is ſtill another method which is more perſuaſive than any of the former, and that is an habitual adoration of the ſupreme being, as well in conſtant acts of mental worſhip as in outward forms: the devout man does not only believe, but feels there is a deity,

deity, he has actual ſenſations of him; his experience concurs with his reaſon, he ſees him more and more in all his intercourſes with him, and even in this life almoſt loſes his faith in conviction.

If we may believe our logicians, man is diſtinguiſhed from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter. He has a heart capable of mirth, and naturally diſpoſed to it. It is not the buſineſs of virtue to extirpate the affections of the mind, but to regulate them. It may moderate and reſtrain, but was not deſigned to baniſh gladneſs from the heart of man; religion contracts the circle of our pleaſures, but leaves it wide enough for her votaries to expatiate in; the contemplation of the Divine Being, and the exerciſe of virtue, are in their own nature ſo far from excluding all gladneſs of heart, that they are perpetual ſources of it. In a word, the true ſpirit of religion cheers as well as compoſes the ſoul; it baniſhes indeed all levity of behaviour, all vicious and diſſolute mirth, but in exchange, fills the mind with a perpetual ſerenity, uninterrupted chearfulneſs, and an habitual inclination to pleaſe others, as well as to be pleaſed in itſelf.

Among all the reflections which uſually riſe in the mind of a ſick man, who has time and inclination to conſider his approaching end, there is none more natural than that

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of his going to appear naked and unbodied before him who made him; when a man conſiders, that as ſoon as the vital union is diſſolved, he ſhall ſee the ſupreme being, whom he now contemplates at a diſtance, and only in his works; or to ſpeak more philoſophically, when by ſome faculty in the ſoul, he ſhall apprehend the Divine Being, and be more ſenſible of his preſence than we are now of the preſence of any object which the eye beholds, a man muſt be loſt in careleſſneſs and ſtupidity, who is not alarmed at ſuch a thought. Doctor Sherlock, in his excellent Treatiſe upon Death, has repreſented in very ſtrong and lively colours, the ſtate of the ſoul in its firſt ſeparation from the body, with regard to that inviſible world which every where ſurrounds us, tho' we are not able to diſcover it through this groſſer world of matter, which are accommodated to our ſenſes in this life. His words are as follow:

"THAT death, which is our leaving this world, is nothing elſe but our putting off theſe bodies, teaches us, that it is only our union to theſe bodies which intercepts the ſight of the other world: the other world is not at ſuch a diſtance from us aswe may imagine; the throne of God indeed is at a great remove from the earth, above the third heavens, where he diſplays his glory to thoſe bleſſed ſpirits which encompaſs his throne; but as ſoon as we ſtep out of theſe bodies,

bodies, we ſtep into the other world, which is not ſo properly another world (for there is the ſame heaven and earth ſtill) as a new ſtate of life. To live in theſe bodies is to live in this world; to live out of them is to remove into the next: for while our ſouls are confined to theſe bodies, and can look only through theſe material caſements, nothing but what is material can affect us, nay, nothing but what is ſo groſs, that it can reflect light, and convey the ſhapes and colours of things with it to the eye: ſo that though within this viſible world, there be a more glorious ſcene of things than what appears to us, we percieve nothing at all of it; for this veil of fleſh parts the viſible and inviſible world: but when we put off theſe bodies, there are new and ſurprizing wonders preſent themſelves to our view; when the material ſpectacles are taken off, the ſoul with its own naked eyes, ſees what was inviſible before, and then we are in the other world, when we can ſee it and converſe with it. Thus St. Paul tells us, that when we are at home in the body we are abſent from the Lord; but when we are abſent from the body, we are preſent with the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 6. 8. and methinks this is enough to cure us of our fondneſs for theſe bodies, unleſs we think it more deſirable to be confined to a priſon, and to look through a grate all our lives, which gives us but a very narrow proſpect, and that none of the beſt neither, than to be ſet at

liberty

liberty to view all the glories of the world. What would we give now for the leaſt glimpſe of that inviſible world, which the firſt ſtep we take out of theſe bodies will preſent us with; theſe are ſuch things as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive: Death opens our eyes, enlarges our proſpects, preſents us with a new, and more glorious world, which we can never ſee while we are ſhut up in the fleſh; which ſhould make us as willing to part with this veil, as to take the film off our eyes which hinders our ſight."

As a thinking man cannot but be much affected with the idea of his appearing in the preſence of that being, whom none can ſee and live; he muſt be much more affected when he conſiders that this being, whom he appears before, will examine all the actions of his paſt life, and reward or puniſh him accordingly. There is no ſcheme of religion beſides that of Chriſtianity, which can poſſibly ſupport the moſt virtuous perſon under this thought. Let a man's innocence be what it will, let his virtues riſe to the higheſt pitch of perfection attainable in this life, there will be ſtill in him ſo many ſecret ſins, ſo many human frailties, ſo many offences of ignorance, paſſion, and prejudice; ſo many ungarded words and thoughts; and in ſhort, ſo many defects in his beſt actions, that without the advantages of ſuch

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an expiation and attonement, as Chriſtianity has revealed to us, it is impoſſible that he ſhould be cleared before his ſovereign judge, or that he ſhould be able to ſtand in his ſight. Our holy religion ſuggeſts to us the only means whereby our guilt may be taken away, and our imperfect obedience accepted.

I.

When riſing from the bed of death,
O'erwhelm'd with guilt and fear,
I ſee my Maker, face to face,
O how ſhall I appear.

II.

If yet while pardon may be found,
And mercy may be ſought;
My heart with inward horror ſhrinks,
And trembles at the thought.

III.

When thou, O Lord, ſhall ſtand diſclos'd
In majeſty ſevere,
And ſit in judgment on my ſoul,
O how ſhall I appear.

IV.

But thou haſt told the troubled mind,
Who does her ſins lament,
The timely tribute of her tears
Shall endleſs woe prevent.

V.

Then ſee the ſorrows of my heart,
E'er yet it be too late;

And

And hear my Saviour's dying groans ;
To give thoſe ſorrows weight.

VI.

For never ſhall my ſoul diſpair,
Her pardon to procure,
Who knows thine only ſon has dy'd,
To make her pardon ſure.

WHAT can we think of thoſe perſons who make uſe of the name of God in the ordinary expreſſions of their anger, mirth, and moſt impertinent paſſions ; of thoſe who admit it into the moſt familiar queſtions and aſſertions, ludicrous phraſes, and works of humour, not to mention thoſe, who violate it by ſolemn perjuries ; it would be an affront to reaſon, to endeavour to ſet forth the horror and profaneneſs of ſuch a practice ; the very mention of it expoſes it ſufficiently to thoſe in whom the light of nature, not to ſay religion, is not utterly extinguiſhed.

A MAN of a warm and well diſpoſed heart, with a very ſmall capacity, is highly ſuperior in human ſociety, to him who, with the greateſt talents, is cold and languid in his affections.

A DRUNKEN man is a greater monſter than any that is to be found among all the creatures which God has made ; as indeed there is no character which appears more deſpicable and deformed, in the eyes of all reaſonable perſons than that of a drunkard ; this

this vice has very fatal effects on the mind, the body, and the fortune, of the person who is devoted to it; in regard to the mind, it first of all discovers every flaw in it; the sober man by strength of reason, may keep under and subdue, every vice or folly to which he is most inclined, but wine makes every latent seed sprout up in the soul, and shew itself; it gives fury to the passions, and force to those objects which are apt to produce them; wine heightens indifference into love, love into jealousy, and jealousy into madness. It often turns the good-natured man into an idiot, and the choleric into an assassin; it gives bitterness to resentment; it makes vanity insupportable, and displays every little spot of the soul in its utmost deformity: nor does this vice only betray the hidden faults of a man, and shew them in the most odious colours, but often occasions faults to which he is not naturally subject. Wine throws a man out of himself, and infuses qualities into the mind, which he is a stranger to in his sober moments; the person you converse with after the third bottle, is not the same man, who at first sat down at table with you; thus does drunkenness act in direct contradiction to reason, whose business it is to clear the mind of every vice which is crept into it, and to guard it against all the approaches of any that endeavours to make its entrance; but besides these ill effects, which this vice produces in a person, who is actually under its dominion;

dominion; it has alſo a bad influence on the mind, even in its ſober moments, as it inſenſibly weakens the underſtanding, impairs the memory, and makes thoſe faults habitual, which are produced by frequent exceſſes.

The merry part of the world are very amiable whilſt they diffuſe a chearfulneſs through converſation at proper ſeaſons, and on proper occaſions, but on the contrary, a great grievance to ſociety when they infeſt every diſcourſe with inſipid mirth, and turn into ridicule ſuch ſubjects, as are not ſuited to it; for though laughter is looked upon by Philoſophers as the property of reaſon, the exceſs of it has been always conſidered as the mark of folly.

On the other ſide, ſerioufneſs has its beauty, whilſt it is attended with chearfulneſs and humanity, and does not come in unſeaſonably to pall the good humour of thoſe with whom we converſe.

Were all the vexations of life put together, we ſhould find that a great part of them proceed from thoſe calumnies and reproaches which we ſpread abroad concerning one another. There is ſcarce a perſon living, who is not in ſome degree, guilty of this offence; though at the ſame time, however we treat one another, it muſt be confeſſed, that we all conſent in ſpeaking

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ill of the perſons who are notorious for this practice: it generally takes its riſe either from an ill will to mankind, a private inclination to make ourſelves eſteemed, an oſtentation of wit, and vanity of being thought in the ſecrets of the world, or from a deſire of gratifying any of theſe diſpoſitions of mind, in thoſe perſons with whom we converſe. The publiſher of ſcandal is more or leſs odious to mankind, and criminal in himſelf, as he is influenced by any one or more of the foregoing motives; but whatever may be the occaſion of ſpreading diſadvantageous reports of others, we ought to conſider, that the effect of them is equally prejudical and pernicious to the perſons at whom they are aimed, the injury is the ſame, though the principle from whence it proceeds may be different: as every one looks on himſelf with too much indulgence when he paſſes a judgment on his own thoughts or actions, and as very few would be thought guilty of this abominable proceeding, which is ſo univerſally practiſed, and at the ſame time ſo univerſally blamed; let every one examine their own heart by the following rules before they ſtand acquitted to themſelves of the evil diſpoſition of mind before mentioned:

FIRST of all, let them conſider whether they do not take delight in hearing the faults of others.

SECONDLY, whether they are not too apt

to believe ſuch little blackening accounts, and more inclined to be credulous on the uncharitable, than to the good natured ſide.

THIRDLY, whether they are not ready to ſpread and propagate ſuch reports as lead to the diſreputation of others.

THESE are the ſeveral ſteps by which this vice proceeds, and grows up into ſlander and defamation.

IN the firſt place, thoſe who take delight in hearing the faults of others, ſhew ſufficiently that they have a true reliſh for ſcandal, and conſequently the ſeeds of this vice within them; if their mind is gratified with hearing the reproaches which are caſt on others, they will find the ſame pleaſure in relating them, and be the more apt to do it, as they will naturally think every one they converſe with, are delighted in the ſame manner with themſelves; we ſhould endeavour therefore to wear out of our minds this criminal curioſity, which is perpetually heightened and inflamed by liſtening to ſuch ſtories as tend to the diſreputation of others.

IN the ſecond place, we ſhould conſult our own hearts whether we are not apt to believe ſuch little blackening accounts, and more inclined to be credulous on the uncharitable, than on the good natured ſide: ſuch a credulity is very vicious in itſelf, and generally ariſes from a conſciouſneſs of our own ſecret corruptions.

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In the third place, we ſhould examine our own hearts whether we do not find in them a ſecret intention to propagate ſuch reports as tend to the diſreputation of others.

When this diſeaſe of the mind ariſes to ſuch a degree of malignity, it diſcovers itſelf in its worſt ſymptoms, and is in danger of becoming incurable; it is needleſs therefore, to inſiſt upon the guilt in this particular, which every one cannot but diſapprove, who is not void of humanity, or even common diſcretion; whatever pleaſure any one may take in ſpreading whiſpers of this nature, they will find infinitely greater ſatisfaction in conquering the temptation they are under, by letting the ſecret die within their own breaſt.

It perhaps requires more virtues to make a good huſband, or wife, than what go to the finiſhing of any the moſt ſhining character whatſoever: Diſcretion ſeems abſolutely neceſſary, and accordingly we find that the beſt huſbands have been moſt famous for their wiſdom; Homer, who hath drawn a perfect pattern of a prudent man, to make it the more compleat hath celebrated him for the juſt returns of fidelity and truth to his Penelope, inſomuch that he refuſed the careſſes of a goddeſs for her ſake, and to uſe the expreſſion of the beſt of Pagan Authors, his old woman was dearer to him than immortality.

Virtue is the next qualification neceſſary for this domeſtic character, as it naturally produces conſtancy and mutual eſteem. Thus Brutus and Porcia were more remarkable for virtue and affection, than any others of the age in which they lived. Good nature is a third neceſſary ingredient in the marriage ſtate, without which it would inevitably ſour upon a thouſand occaſions.

When greatneſs of mind is joined with this amiable quality, it attracts the admiration and eſteem of all who behold it. Thus Cæſar, not more remarkable for his fortune and valour, than for his humanity, ſtole into the hearts of the Roman people, when breaking through the cuſtom he pronounced an oration at the funeral of his firſt and beſt beloved wife. Good nature is inſufficient, unleſs it be ſteady and uniform, and accompanied with an evenneſs of temper which is above all things to be preſerved, in this friendſhip contracted for life. A man muſt be eaſy within himſelf before he can be ſo to his other ſelf. If the wedded pair would but habituate themſelves for the firſt year to bear with one another's faults, the difficulty would be pretty well conquered. This mutual ſweetneſs of temper and complacency, was finely recommended in the nuptial ceremonies among the Heathens, who when they ſacrificed to Juno at that ſolemnity, always tore out the gall from the entrails of the victim, and caſt it behind the altar.

CLEANLINESS may be ſaid to be the foſter mother of love. Beauty indeed moſt commonly produces that paſſion in the mind, but cleanlineſs preſerves it. An indifferent face and perſon, kept in perpetual neatneſs, hath won many a heart from a pretty flattern. Age itſelf is not unamiable while it is preſerved clean, and unſullied: like a piece of metal conſtantly kept ſmooth and bright, we look on it with more pleaſure than a new veſſel that is cankered with ruſt. As cleanlineſs renders us agreeable to others, ſo it makes us eaſy to ourſelves, and is an excellent preſerver of health.

EVERY ſenſible man will allow, that ſingularity is laudable when in contradiction to a multidue it adheres to the dictates of reaſon, conſcience, morality and honour. In theſe caſes we ought to conſider that it is not cuſtom, but duty, which is the rule of action, and that we ſhould be only ſo far ſociable as we are reaſonable creatures. Truth is never the leſs ſo, for not being attended to; and it is the nature of actions, not the number of actors, by which we ought to regulate our behaviour. Singularity of this kind is to be looked upon as heroic bravery, in which a man leaves the ſpecies only as he ſoars above it. What greater inſtance can there be of a weak and puſillanimous temper, than for a man to paſs his whole life in oppoſition to his own ſentiments; or not to dare to be what he thinks he ought to be. Singularity, therefore,

fore, is only vicious when it makes men act contrary to reaſon, or when it puts them upon diſtinguiſhing themſelves by trifles. As for the firſt of theſe who are ſingular in any thing that is irreligious, immoral or diſhonourable, every one will eaſily give them up. As for thoſe who are remarkable for their ſingularity in things of no importance, as in dreſs, behaviour, converſation, and all the little intercourſes of life, they ſhould conſider that there is a certain defference due to cuſtom; and notwithſtanding there may be a colour of reaſon to deviate from the multitude in ſome particulars, a man ought to ſacrifice his private inclinations and opinions to the practice of the public. It muſt be confeſſed that good ſenſe often makes a humouriſt; but then it unqualifies him for being of any moment in the world and renders him ridiculous to perſons of a much inferior underſtanding.

Should a ſpirit of a ſuperior rank, who is a ſtranger to human nature, accidentally alight upon the earth, and take a ſurvey of its inhabitants; what would his notions of us be? would not he think that we are a ſpecies of beings made for quite different ends and purpoſes, than what we really are? muſt not he imagine that we were placed in this world to get riches and honours? would he not think it our duty to toil after wealth, and ſtation, and title? nay, would not he believe we were forbidden poverty by threats of eternal puniſhment, and enjoined

joined to purſue our pleaſures under pain of damnation? he would certainly imagine that we were influenced by a ſcheme of duties quite oppoſite to thoſe which are indeed preſcribed to us: and truly according to ſuch an imagination, he muſt conclude that we are a ſpecies of the moſt obedient creatures in the univerſe; that we are conſtant to our duty, and that we keep a ſteady eye on the end for which we were ſent hither. But how great would be his aſtoniſhment, when he learnt that we were beings not deſigned to exiſt in this world above threeſcore and ten years; and that the greateſt part of this buſy ſpecies fall ſhort even of that age; how would he be loſt in horror and amazement when he ſhould know that this ſet of creatures who lay out all their endeavours for this life, which ſcarce deſerves the name of exiſtence, are intended to exiſt to all eternity in another life, for which they make no preparations: Nothing can be a greater diſgrace to reaſon, than that men who are perſwaded of theſe two different ſtates of being, ſhould be perpetually employed in providing for a life of threeſcore and ten years, and neglecting to make proviſion for that which after many myriads of years, will be ſtill new, and ſtill beginning; eſpecially when we conſider that our endeavours for making ourſelves great, or rich, or honourable, or whatever elſe we place our happineſs in, may after all prove unſucceſsful; whereas, if we conſtantly and ſincerely endeavour to make ourſelves happy in the

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other life, we are ſure that our endeavours will ſucceed, and that we ſhall not be diſappointed of our hope. Every wiſe man therefore will conſider this life only as it may conduce to the happineſs of the other, and chearfully ſacrifice the pleaſures of a few years, to thoſe of an eternity.

Father of light and life thou good ſupreme;
O teach me what is good: teach me thyſelf;
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low purſuit; and feed my ſoul
With knowledge, conſcious peace, and
virtue pure,
Sacred, ſubſtantial, never-fading bliſs;

Conscious virtue is the only ſolid foundation of all happineſs; for riches, power, rank, or whatever in the common acceptation of the word, is ſuppoſed to conſtitute happineſs, will never quiet, much leſs cure the inward pangs of guilt.

Every rational man ſhould every night when he goes to bed aſk himſelf this queſtion, What have I done to day? have I done any thing that can be of uſe to myſelf or others? have I employed my time, or have I doſed it away in ſloth and lazineſs? a thinking being muſt be pleaſed or confounded, according as he can anſwer himſelf theſe queſtions.

FINIS.